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UNCLAS WELLINGTON 000243

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/ANP-TRAMSEY, EB/TRA/OTP-DHAYWOOD AND
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SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND: INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION AND
OUTREACH ON MARITIME SECURITY

REF: STATE 38874

1. In response to reftel, following are details and a few observations on how post handles maritime security issues in New Zealand.

2. Post and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) attach, based in Singapore, work closely to coordinate our approaches to the New Zealand government on maritime security issues. Meanwhile, the ICE attach and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) also have forged a direct, cooperative relationship with their New Zealand Customs Service counterparts. This relationship in particular has resulted in an increase in information sharing, including export and transshipment data. The CBP and New Zealand Customs recently concluded an agreement to implement a comprehensive and cooperative supply chain security arrangement that will improve information sharing and target and screen high-risk cargo between the two countries. CBP and NZ Customs are conducting real-time targeting, screening and examination trials to develop this arrangement. While post's defense, regional security and economic officers are included in these efforts, the direct relationship between ICE/CBP and New Zealand Customs has enhanced the exchange of information and expertise. In turn, post's work with other parts of the New Zealand government -- such as the Ministry of Transport -- on maritime security issues has focused on policy matters.

3. OSD recently authorized Pacific Command to place a New Zealand civilian law enforcement or civilian intelligence liaison officer on the Joint Interagency Task Force West (JIATF West) staff in Honolulu. Members of New Zealand Customs, Police and Maritime Safety Authority will visit JIATF West in April to determine which agency will contribute the liaison officer. The officer will provide an insight into the South Pacific region that PACOM has not yet attained and will be invaluable in handling maritime security issues in the region. We expect the liaison officer to be in place in Honolulu as early as late 2005.

4. Post recently began working directly with the U.S. Coast Guard, which in September-October 2004 sent a team to New Zealand to review its compliance with the International Maritime Organization's International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. Through this visit, the Coast Guard has begun to develop a direct relationship with New Zealand's Maritime Safety Authority, Customs Service and other relevant agencies.

5. As a small post, Embassy Wellington has found that ad hoc meetings are sufficient for coordinating USG efforts in New Zealand on maritime security issues. Responsibilities within the post are fairly well defined, with the defense attach handling issues involving New Zealand defense forces; the regional security officer handling civilian-related security issues; and, the economic officer handling issues with any potential commercial impact and serving as post's primary contact with the ICE/CBP office in Singapore.

SWINDELLS